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International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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Meeting of the States Parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Twenty-third Meeting

Summary record of the 29th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 9 September 2004, at 10 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. Mokhiber ..... (Representative of the Secretary-General)
Chairman: Mr. Mekdad ..... (Syrian Arab Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Opening of the meeting by the representative of the Secretary-General

1. **The Temporary Chairman** informed the Committee that the main purpose of the Meeting was to elect, in accordance with Part IV of the Covenant, nine members of the Human Rights Committee for terms of office beginning on 1 January 2005 and ending on 31 December 2008. Since the previous Meeting of States parties, Djibouti, Turkey, Timor-Leste and Swaziland had become parties to the Covenant, Djibouti and South Africa had become parties to the Optional Protocol and the Czech Republic, Djibouti, Estonia, Paraguay and Timor-Leste had become parties to the Second Optional Protocol. The total number of States parties to the Covenant was now 152, of which 104 were also parties to the First Optional Protocol and 53 to the Second Optional Protocol.

2. Since the autumn of 2002, the Human Rights Committee had paid consistent attention to the Secretary-General's call for a streamlining and reform of the treaty reporting system. Its Chairman and representatives had participated in the consultative processes and in the second and third inter-committee meetings in June 2003 and 2004, respectively, at which the issue had been discussed in detail. In October 2004, the Committee would discuss the outcome of the third inter-committee meeting, and in particular the issue of draft guidelines for an expanded or common core document, in plenary session.

3. Various decisions on working methods which the Committee had adopted since the previous meeting of States parties had made the reporting procedure under article 40 of the Covenant more effective. The country report task forces had proved to be a helpful tool in the consideration of initial and periodic reports, by fostering an informed, high-quality dialogue between members of the Committee and State party delegations. The procedures for follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations established in 2001 had been further developed. One sign of the new reporting procedure's efficacy was the fact that some 90 per cent of the 30-odd States parties to which it had been applied since 2001 had provided follow-up information. The Committee planned to discuss its experience with that procedure during its third meeting with States parties, to be held in Geneva on 28 October 2004 during the Committee's eighty-second session.

4. The Committee's caseload under the first Optional Protocol had continued to grow and currently stood at some 300 cases. In order to avoid a further increase in the backlog of pending cases, the Committee had extended its seventy-eighth session in August 2003 by an additional week and had converted the meeting of the Working Group on Communications at its eighty-first session in July 2002 into a week of plenary meetings. During its eighty-first session in July 2004, the Committee had adopted a decision on working methods under the Optional Protocol to expedite the processing of complaints and to enable it to adopt decisions on the admissibility and merits of more complaints in the future.

Election of the Chairman

5. **Mr. Gallegos Chiriboga** (Ecuador) nominated Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) for the office of Chairman.

6. *Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) was elected Chairman by acclamation.*

7. *Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) took the Chair.*

Adoption of the agenda (CCPR/SP/63)

8. *The agenda was adopted.*

9. **The Chairman** noted that although rule 2 of the rules of procedure stated that the credentials of representatives and the names of members of delegations were to be submitted to the Secretary-General not later than one week before the date fixed for the opening of the Meeting, a number of States parties had not yet submitted their credentials. He suggested that, in accordance with rule 3, the representatives of those States parties should be authorized provisionally to participate in the Meeting. He urged those representatives to ensure that their credentials were submitted to the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

10. *It was so decided.*

Election of other officers

11. **The Chairman** said that Ms. Blokar (Slovenia), Mr. Balestra (San Marino), Mr. Diarra (Mali) and

Mr. Toro Jimenez (Venezuela) had been nominated for the office of Vice-Chairman.

12. *Ms. Blokar (Slovenia), Mr. Balestra (San Marino), Mr. Diarra (Mali) and Mr. Toro Jimenez (Venezuela) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.*

Election, in accordance with articles 28 to 34 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, of nine members of the Human Rights Committee to replace those whose terms are due to expire on 31 December 2004 (CCPR/SP/62 and Add.1)

13. **The Chairman** drew attention to the particulars of candidates nominated by States parties to fill the nine vacancies on the Human Rights Committee. The Secretariat had been informed that Burkina Faso had withdrawn its candidate. Accordingly, there were currently 11 candidates for the nine seats. He also drew attention to the voting procedure and other relevant provisions of articles 30 and 31 of the Covenant.

14. He invited representatives to elect by secret ballot nine members of the Human Rights Committee.

15. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Baleseng (Botswana), Mr. Savchuk (Ukraine) and Mr. Tekin (Turkey) acted as tellers.*

16. *A vote was taken by secret ballot.*

Number of ballot papers:	*146*
Invalid ballots:	*0*
Number of valid ballots:	*146*
Abstentions:	*none*
Number of representatives voting:	*146*
Required majority:	*74*

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Khalil (Egypt)	127
Ms. Wadstein (Sweden)	125
Sir Nigel Rodley (United Kingdom)	122
Mr. Glèlè-Ahahanzou (Benin)	119
Mr. Rivas Posada (Colombia)	119
Mr. Shearer (Australia)	119
Mr. Johnson Lopez (Ecuador)	115
Mr. O'Flaherty (Ireland)	113
Mr. Lallah (Mauritius)	107
Mr. Depasquale (Malta)	103
Mr. El Hajje (Lebanon)	90

17. *Having obtained the required majority and the largest number of votes, Mr. Glèlè-Ahahanzou (Benin), Mr. Johnson Lopez (Ecuador), Mr. Khalil (Egypt), Mr. Lallah (Mauritius), Mr. O'Flaherty (Ireland), Mr. Rivas Posada (Colombia), Sir Nigel Rodley (United Kingdom), Mr. Shearer (Australia) and Ms. Wadstein (Sweden) were elected members of the Human Rights Committee.*

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.